

Mayor Tom Johnson's Idea.

In His City Government He Carries Into Effect "Equal Rights to All--Special Privileges to None."

By Tom L. Johnson, Mayor of Cleveland, Ohio.

The subject is too vast, too far reaching, too important for me to fully discuss at this time. I will therefore touch upon two topics which seem paramount to me just now.

I refer to the public ownership of municipal monopolies and to an equal and just taxation of the citizens of a city. The proper solution of these two questions will, I think, bring about as ideal a city as I can hope to see for years.

In the first place, municipal monopolies consist of rights and special privileges in the public streets and highways, which, in the nature of the case, cannot be possessed by all the people, and can only be enjoyed by a few.

A constant struggle goes on to obtain such privileges with the result of checking and retarding for a long time necessary public improvements. Rival claimants not strong enough to obtain what they want often succeed in checkmating each other at the expense of denying to the public needed advantages.

Only a slight observation of, and reflection upon, the needs of people crowded together in the city, as to facility of moving about, as to communication, as to supply of water, as to supply of artificial light, is needed to satisfy any candid man that such businesses are in their nature monopolistic.

My proposition on this subject is to enlarge the functions of municipalities so that the means of transportation and communication, and the supply of water and light shall be furnished by public authority and not by private enterprise and extend this principle to its logical result, of taking under public administration all business which required the grant of any special right or privilege. We have already started on this road and made considerable progress.

Under present conditions, the adoption of this policy would require the taking over by the public only of the water, gas, electric light and power supply, the telephone and the railroads.

The evils which a great many timid people fear as likely to arise from enlarging the scope of the functions of municipalities are trivial in comparison with the evils which are inseparable from the present system.

As long as the great rewards which these monopolies offer to private enterprise are possible, your industries will be hampered, your policies will be corrupted with bribery and fraud, and your people will have to pay unnecessarily high prices for these kinds of services, and they will be subject to daily and hourly inconveniences and vexation, owing to the poor quality of the service.

I would not advocate any disregard of existing rights or any confiscation of existing property. It would be no violation of existing rights for cities to use their tax powers so as to compel the present private owners to bear the same proportion of public burdens, according to the value of their property, including franchises, which owners of the other kinds of private property have to bear.

It would be no violation of existing rights, where the power had not been barred away, for the cities or the State to regulate fares and rates of compensation, so as made them yield only a fair return on the actual investment made rather than upon a fictitious capitalization based mainly upon franchises or special privilege values.

In short, municipalities ought not to hesitate to do what private person in business do as a matter of course.

Every taxpayer ought to be interested in just an equal taxation, for the happiness and welfare of the people and the prosperity and safety of the State depend upon just and equal taxation. Under the existing laws and the methods of executing them in Ohio we now have farm lands assessed at 80 per cent of their real value.

The homes of the small owners of city real estate are taxed at 60 per cent of their real value. Steam railroads are assessed at about 22 per cent of their real value, and hence pay only one-third of their fair share of taxes as compared with the farmers and small property owners of the State.

Street railroads or other public service corporations use the property of the people, and by keeping up the price for service, make immense

profits, but they value their property as "junk" when returning it for taxation, and so pay about one tenth of their fair share of taxes as compared with farmers and small property owners. By reason of the fact that so much of the taxable property in the State unjustly evades taxation, the property of the honest and helpless is taxed at a much higher rate than it would be if property was honestly assessed as the constitution of the State demands. The property of great corporations is almost untaxed, and thus the burden of taxation is not born on all property alike, but is unjustly thrown upon the property of the farmer and small home owner.

These are not party questions. They are questions of honesty, fairness and justice, and the people will answer them aright. No cause that is true can lose. This cause is true and therefore must prevail.

When I assumed the Mayoralty of Cleveland, I saw the strange inequalities in matters of taxation and I established a so-called tax school in the municipal building. I found that not half of the personal property and not hardly any of the privileges had been appraised in Cuyahoga County.

Nearly all the real estate, however, is appraised. But little of the property I found to be taxed according to its true value in money. Some property like houses and lots, which cannot be hidden, is taxed for nearly its true value in money. The two street railroads in this city are worth in money \$20,410,000. The stock quotations show this. They were listed for taxation in 1901 at \$1,883,860. The City Board of Equalization which appointed raised the appraisal of the street railroad companies from \$1,883,860 to \$14,780,560. It also increased the appraisal of the two gas companies from \$827,900 to \$4,416,100. It raised the electric light company from \$25,500 to \$1,122,620. It has added a total of \$17,879,390 of property to the tax duplicate which had always before escaped taxation, and this has caused the Tax Commission to reduce the rate of taxation in the city from 3 per cent last year to 2.67 per cent for the year to come.

I have endeavored to compel the auditors of the State to appraise steam railroad property the same as farms and small homes are appraised, which would have added \$10,000,000 to the tax duplicated in this country and would have further reduced the tax rate, but they would give me no heed.

Some of them rode on railroad passes and said nothing, others said I was trying to make political capital. All refused to make any substantial increase in the valuation of the steam railroads above what the railroad officers themselves had appraised their own companies.

I intend to try my best to have the law amended that railroad properties shall be appraised as going concerns at their market value.

I shall require that all public service corporations, such as street railroads, gas, electric light and telephone companies must make public report to the auditing officers of municipalities, so that the people may know the value of public franchises and the amount of money these corporations have invested.

I propose that a law be passed by which the officer who takes passes from railroads will be deemed guilty of bribery.

In conclusion let me say: Equal taxation will solve the trust problem. Trusts live through special privileges granted to them; upon which they do not pay taxes. Tax the special privileges and the question will be solved. Equal taxation will solve the greatest problem of the world--the labor problem.

Heads I Win, Tails You Lose.

The special privileged fraternity are seeing to it that "reliable" and "safe" men are nominated as candidates for the supreme bench on both the Republican and Democratic tickets. Then they will put up the campaign boodle for both parties and smilingly await results--knowing that they are playing a safe game of "heads I win, tails you lose."

A PRINTER WANTED.

The KICKER needs a good printer. Good position for the right man. Hobos need not apply.

For His Mothers Sake.

The florist's boy had just swept some broken and withered flowers into the gutter, when a ragged unclean darted across the street. He came upon a rose seemingly in better condition than the rest. But as he tenderly picked it up the petals fluttered to the ground leaving only the bare stalk in his hand.

He stood quite still, and his lips quivered perceptibly. "What's the matter with you anyway?" the florist asked.

The ragged little fellow choked as he answered, "It's for my mother. She's sick, and she can't eat nothin', an' I thought if she'd a flower to smell it might make her feel better."

"Just wait a minute said the florist's boy as he disappeared. When he came out upon the sidewalk he held in his hand a beautiful half-opened rose.

"There," he said take that to your mother."

He had meant to put that rosebud on his mother's grave, and yet he knew that he had done the better thing. "She'll understand," he said to himself, "and I know this will please her most."

The Referendum.

On April first the city of Chicago took a vote on the municipal ownership of gas and electric light plants, on the direct nomination of candidates at primaries and the municipal ownership of the street railways.

The Chicago Post, a paper that opposes municipal ownership, says:

"The total vote polled was rather light even for an off-year. Thousands seem to have been indifferent to the practical and theoretical issues of the election. But it is extremely gratifying to know that nearly four-fifths of those who did vote availed themselves of the privilege of expressing an opinion on the three propositions on the separate 'referendum' ballot. The referendum is an ancient and valuable American institution. Its extension is certain and inevitable, and the opposition to it is largely based on prejudicial ignorance."

"That the voters manifested discrimination and previous study the figures indicate beyond reasonable doubt. On the question of direct nomination at primaries and the displacing of bosses and machines the vote stands: For 125,082; against 15,861. There is little reason to suppose that the ratio would be different on a maximum vote. There is a growing demand for democracy or true majority rule in nominations. Where the selections of candidates is left to political dictators and professional politicians, elections are empty formalities. The city manipulated convention will soon follow King Caucus into the political lumber-room."

"On the question of municipal ownership and operation of gas and electric light plants, the vote is 124,100 to 20,007, while on that of municipal ownership and operation of street railways it stands, 124,504 to 25,987. It is plain to sensible citizens that this 'reform' contains greater possibilities of political and industrial mischief, and they are more reluctant to favor it even as a lesser evil."

"Now municipal ownership of so-called public utilities is municipal socialism. It is repugnant to the American principle of industrial freedom, of minimum interference with enterprise, of all encouragement to private initiative and legitimate business. Chicago has not been converted to municipal socialism, and we believe that if the voters were called upon to choose between municipal operation and private operation under a fair, equitable contract and due regulation, the great majority would unhesitatingly vote for the latter policy."

It might be interesting to have the Post outline a "fair, equitable contract" that would meet both the approval of the people of Chicago and the manipulators of watered stocks. If the municipal ownership of street railways, water and artificial light is municipal socialism, is not the government ownership of the postal service government or national socialism?

Reunion of Rogers Family.

Rev. O. T. Rogers, of Commerce, returned from a family reunion at the parental home in Bloomington, Ill. The father of Rev. Rogers is also a minister and preached the first sermon in the now flourishing city of Bloomington in what was then a district school house built of logs. He is now 90 years old and was the youngest of a family of thirteen and the father of a family of twelve children, seven of whom are still living. The mother is 81.

The living descendants are fifty-three. Grand-children, 20; great-grand-children, 9.

A SUCCESSFUL MEETING.

Public Ownership Speakers Given a Respectful Hearing Last Saturday.

Defenders of the State House Ring Did Not Show Up, Although Pressing Invitations Were Extended.

Hon. H. Martin Williams, now of Woodlawn, Ill., and Hon. Joseph M. Ingalls, of Scotland county, Mo., addressed a representative gathering of Scott county farmers at the court house here Saturday afternoon, on public ownership and direct legislation, and the crowd was eager to hear something different than the yawpings of the practical politicians to whom they have listened so patiently and so long.

Although farmers were very busy, and three threshing machines were running within a mile of Benton, yet it was the largest gathering of men who till the soil that has attended a political meeting in Scott county for many a day--notwithstanding the efforts of the Scott county end of the State House Ring to prevent a successful meeting.

The meeting was advertised (that is to say, an attempt was made to advertise the meeting by hand bills, but the bills were destroyed almost as fast as they could be put up--more than one hundred having been destroyed in one day) for two o'clock, but a justice court trial was started up at the court house and some of the farmers who had come to hear the speakers were picked up on the jury and, by request, the speaking was postponed until after the trial.

While it may have been perfectly "according to law" to proceed with the trial under the circumstances, yet it is well known that had the speaking been in the interest of the Democratic "party," quite a different arrangement would have been made. Spell-binders are often advertised to speak here during circuit court, and the court always adjourns at great cost to the tax-payers to furnish the time and the crowd to the mouthpieces of the "party." But it was different Saturday. However, the farmers declared their willingness to remain until night, if necessary, and all went well.

Shortly after 3 o'clock the trial concluded and the speakers entered the court house. In a little while the court room was well filled with farmers who farm the soil. The farmers who farm the farmer were conspicuously absent. It was not their day. Perhaps they were busy taking an inventory of the chattel mortgages they hold against their tenants--now that the harvest is at hand.

J. T. Marrs, of Sandywoods township, acted as master of ceremonies and introduced Mr. Williams. Mr. Williams spoke for nearly two hours and held the attention of his hearers wonderfully. No speaker was ever given closer and more respectful attention. He invited questions from his hearers and told the farmers that he wanted them to understand that it was his meeting, and that he was there to make courteous answer to any question they might ask.

Mr. Williams is a life-long Democrat and was reading clerk in the LAST Missouri House of Representatives. When the state administration endorsed Rolla Wells he quit. He openly charged that the present state administration was undemocratic and corrupt, and invited anyone who cared to take issue with him to "trot out." But the defenders of "Missouri's low tax rate" were not in a trotting humor just then. But some of our tin-horn politicians, who wouldn't recognize a Democratic principle if they met it in the road, got "even" after Mr. Williams had gone. They spoke of him as "a bolter," "not a Democrat," "broke down politician," "disgruntled," and like convincing (?) arguments (?).

At the conclusion of his address Mr. Williams courteously introduced Mr. Ingalls, who waded right in. Owing to the lateness of the hour Mr. Ingalls undertook to crowd time and spoke rather fast and was not as well understood as Mr. Williams. The men who had especially invited to meet him in debate did not show up. He spoke for about an hour quite entertainingly. Mr. Williams concluded the meeting by urging the farmers to organize clubs in their respective school districts--promising to furnish literature and speakers to address them on request. Mr. Williams also authorized the KICKER to arrange a debate with any defender of the State House Ring, or anybody else, from anywhere, who opposes public ownership and he will meet them. And when the corporations send out their spell-binders they fall their managers in Scott county will either have to crawl in their hole

and pull the hole in after them, or else face the music.

The meeting of Saturday was a decided success--and especially so when it is considered that farmers were so very busy. It was a much larger and very different crowd than turned out to hear ex-Gov. Stone when he spoke here. Stone's crowd was made up of farmers who farm the farmer. The turnout of Saturday was made up of farmers who till the soil.

The speakers were highly pleased with the success of the meeting and the respectful attention given them. They left for their homes the next morning.

Machine-Made Candidates.

The Globe-Democrat draws quite a realistic picture of the proceedings at the judicial convention. Here it is, piping hot:

"A sweeping triumph for the Seibert-Cook-Stone-Dockery ring is the result of the Democratic judicial convention at Springfield. With a grip of iron the ring holds the state, the same ring that personally owns and directs the state supreme court and sells out legislatures for blocks of corporation cash handed to the Democratic state chairman. Jim Seibert is still the supreme manipulator in the Democratic party of Missouri, and he is the Democratic state chairman who, according to sworn Democratic testimony, receives the corporation cash as an equivalent for the laws the corporations want. Seibert scored his greatest personal triumph at the Springfield convention. The only new man nominated for supreme judge is peculiarly Seibert's man. Not long ago Seibert authorized the announcement that he would not again be a candidate for the state chairmanship. But he doesn't have to be state chairman to be the party dictator. A few months ago a large number of democrats from southeast Missouri suddenly turned up in St. Louis and, to Seibert's amazement, endorsed Judge Fort, of that section, for supreme judge. Seibert had already selected Judge Fox. And, of course, Fox gets the nomination. Seibert's first move was to sidetrack Judge Fort with promises. His second move was to hand Fox the nomination at Springfield. He touched the button, with the usual result."

"In its personal conduct the Springfield convention was one of the most disgraceful ever held in any state. The temporary chairman arbitrarily adjourned the convention and during the recess undertook to quiet his conscience in a way that induced the convention to excuse him. For the most of the time the secretary, reading clerk or nearest delegate on the platform acted as chairman. When the secretary was called on for a certain report he read something else as a strategic measure. Dave Ball ripped up the majority report referring all political issues to a later convention by offering a resolution endorsing the Kansas City platform, and it was carried by 501 to 199. All the bosses were there--Seibert, Cook, Dockery and the rest. They were in full war paint and carried every point they wanted except silence on the silver question, and as there is no patronage in that they regarded it as a minor matter."

"Two of the present ring-serving supreme court judges, Burgess and Valliant, were renominated. The ring has tested their obedience to its demands and is willing to trust them for similar unquestioning senility in the future. The new nominee, Fox, being Seibert's personal selection, is entirely satisfactory to the rest of the ring. What Seibert says goes with the state supreme court, and is also the higher law with his ringster associates."

"The ringsters got everything they wanted at the Springfield convention except silence on the silver question. Through a majority report from the committee rooms the ring proposed that 'all matters pertaining to the state and national affairs be remitted to the consideration and action of the Democratic state convention at St. Joseph July 22.' But Dave Ball spoiled this evasive scheme by offering a resolution declaring that 'We, the Democrats of Missouri in convention assembled, do hereby endorse the principles of the Democratic party as enunciated in the national Democratic platform of 1900 in Kansas City.' There was much clamor in opposition, especially among the 122 machine-made delegates from St. Louis, many of whom represent nothing but the 20,000 bogus names voted in this city in 1900 and 1901. The Ball resolution was forced through by the main body of the convention itself."

At Public Sale. I will sell, at my farm, northwest of Commerce, to the highest bidder, on Tuesday, July 29, 1902, all my horses, mules, cattle, hogs, farm implements, house-hold and kitchen furniture. Twelve months credit will be given on all sums of over \$5--purchaser giving note with approved security. Theo. J. Pool.

From Kelso.

Anna Maria Blattel died at the home of her son, Nick Spauhauer, on Thursday of last week, aged 83 years. She was buried in the Catholic cemetery here Friday.

Anton and Barney Bandendist were called to the bedside of their sick sister at Perryville Tuesday. A message received Wednesday reported the death of the sister.

Our school building is now receiving the finishing touches at the hands of Carpenter Mike Welter and Painter Andrew Jones. Both are excellent workmen.

Our people want all other people to keep in mind that we are going to have the banner picnic on August 12. Keep that in mind.

Kelso will soon be connected with the rest of the world by telegraph. Men are now putting in the wires.

Monday a girl was born to Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Unterstall. She was baptised Juliana Rufina Tuesday.

A boy born to Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Dunney and baptised Charles Oswin here on July 4.

Louis and Frank Schaefer and Moses Drury rode their wheels to the Cape Sunday.

Herman Grosman, of the New York Store, is opening up a store at Blodgett.

Bartie Dunney is very sick. His daughter, Ida, is up again.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Williams visited Oran last week.

Fritz Sackery came down from the Cape Sunday.

Clements Westrich was in Benton Wednesday.

Albert Mantz and wife visited the Cape Sunday.

From New Hamburg.

Prof. Schulte and Peter Schoen are the champion berry pickers in Scott county. The berries they brought in were delicious, but it is hard to tell which they had most of--berries or chiggers. Prof. Schulte objects to chigger company and has sworn off berry picking.

Coletta Gort entertained a number of her little friends Friday afternoon. There were present the Misses Estella Heisserer, of Benton; Augusta Schulte, New Hamburg; Anna Winkelman, St. Louis; and Martha Schulte, Fredericktown.

Nick Dannemann is out of pocket at a nine-months-old male Durham calf, with split and underbit in left ear. Has been gone about three months. If you see or hear of it, tell Nick.

A boy was born to Mr. and Mrs. John M. Scherer on July 9 and was christened George Cornelius.

On July 8 a boy was born to Mr. and Mrs. Louis Dolhogue and christened Theodore Louis.

Father Heimbacher, of Oran, spent Friday night of last week with Father Moenig.

Prof. Schulte and Peter Schoen were at Benton Tuesday.

Quite a number of Bentonsites were here trading this week.

Around Home.

Uncle Jack Dowell lost a pair of silver-rimmed spectacles in home-made leather case on his rural free delivery route. Finder will please leave them at the mill.

The little daughter of Anton Le-grand, who had her arm broken as the result of a fall from a hammock, is getting along nicely.

R. A. Kingsbury sold his Morehouse farm to Calvin Greer. Considerations \$8,000.

Theon Heisseres came up from Essex Wednesday.

John C. Witt and wife, of Sikeston, were here Wednesday.

Thos. Pool, Commerce, was in town Monday.

Our Mail Service.

Certainly no town in Missouri has a more miserable mail service than Benton, unless it is the other towns that are dependent upon the Peavine. A letter mailed here at 9 o'clock a. m. will remain in our postoffice 24 hours at best. Mail leaving here for the south in the morning remains at Morley until evening. There is absolutely no telling when a mail will arrive or depart and it is the exception when a mail gets in on what is called "time."

From Commerce.

'Tis a piece of public ownership, I reckon, to plant a gasoline reservoir in a frequented street so as not to do damage to private property. When she blows up; and if she will take the ownership with her when she blows up the public, we shall wink the other eye at our city duds for granting such damphool privileges.

Cashier Wylie and Dr. Hutton chartered the little boat, City of St. Louis, for a trip around the world Sunday and sailed via Powers Island around the horn of Burnham Island up to Santa Fe, thence home.

August C. Rasberry died of consumption Wednesday morning at 5 o'clock, aged 58 years. Mr. Rasberry was a descendant from one of the first settlers of Commerce township.

The young folks had a dance at Sewell's hall Friday evening in honor of the Misses Stotts, Heggie and Clarkson of Charleston, and Miss Love, of Bertrand.

Oh, but we've got a mail service now, and id. Decidently Mr. Houck is trying to destroy confidence in the government ownership of the postal system. Give us the lack!

Swallow & Co's. show drew a large crowd Saturday evening, and Monday Tinsley's show came along and captured the remainder of our loose change.

The Peavine killed a fine Jersey cow for Mrs. C. Anderson and refused payment because the killing was inside the city limits. How's this, city duds?

Dr. Blackledge and B. C. More and families took an armstrong propeller for Old Orchard Sunday and spent the day hunting wild flowers.

There are about hundred men at work here putting in new steel rails on the Peavine. Good!

River is rising again. Will be higher than it has yet been this season.

From Morley.

When we wrote of the man in Morley who had never seen the inside of a passenger coach there was quite a "breeze" over the affair. Now comes Benton with a young lady who had never seen a railroad, train till she went to Oran on the Fourth over the Peavine and Iron-Mountain. Now blow, breeze, Commerce.

The straightness of both of the G. O. P.'s here refused to tolerate the speaking at Benton Saturday--fearing that to listen to anything except the regulation partisan harangue might contaminate their political convictions.

Dr. Freeding was unkind enough to ask Representative Williams when Seibert would go into session again. Seibert is not the whole show. There are also Phelps, Clardy and "Brown."

Jesse M. Adams and C. Pearl Harris left for Joplin Sunday to attend the Republican judicial convention. Of course "Brown" paid freight. The Iron-Mountain depot will be moved this week down near the crossing, thus making it more convenient for the traveling public.

Dunklin county melons are passing quite freely over the Peavine and the Iron-Mountain routes.

Look out for August 14. Big posters will tell you all about it.

From Oran.

Mrs. P. R. Williams and son Paul, of Kelso, visited relatives here Friday.

Mrs. J. W. Clemson and sister visited Morley Monday.

Miss Bulah Tuck returned home Monday from a visit to Jackson.

Ed Glascock returned to Beaumont Texas Monday.

Rex Cunningham, of Blodgett, was here Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Hargis left for their future home at Ellis Grove, Ill., Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Strublefield will leave for White Springs soon, where they have an elegant summer home.

Dr. L. A. Richmond and son Carl, of Dyer, Tenn., are visiting here.

Walter Dillingham is dangerously ill and his recovery doubtful.

Republican Judicial Convention.

The Republican convention, in session at Joplin this week, nominated as their candidates for supreme judges, Henry Lamm, of Sedalia; Moses Whybank, of Marble Hill, and Edward Higbee, of Lancaster.

Cape Girardeau Tri-Weekly Packet,

Steamer CHESTER, Is Now a Through Boat.

Between St. Louis and Cape Girardeau, and north of Grand Tower will make no landing except for passengers. Leaves St. Louis Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 4 o'clock p. m. Returning, leaves Cape Girardeau on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays at 9 a. m. sharp. The only steel hull and only safe boat from snags on the Mississippi River. Makes railroad time and therefore makes connections with the railroads of that city.